

The Khanika Samadhi Of Cittavisuddhi

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There are some respected teachers who believe that a suddha vipassana yanika individual does not need to develop samadhi, but can proceed to do vipassana practice with only **khanika samadhi** (momentary concentration). For this reason let us explain a little about the khanika samadhi of a suddha vipassana yanika individual at the time of attaining citta visuddhi and the khanika samadhi present at the time of true vipassana practice.

A samatha yanika individual who has developed one of the jhanas and therefore completed citta visuddhi (purification of mind) and who wishes to complete ditthi visuddhi (purification of view), should enter into any of the jhanas, except for the base consisting of neither perception nor non perception. After having emerged from that jhana he should discern the jhana factors, beginning with vitakka, etc, and all the mental factors (cetasikas) associated with that jhana consciousness. Each should be discerned according to characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. After that, he should take them all together as nama because they all have the characteristic of bending towards the object.

Then again he should discern: The hadayavatthu rupa where those namas reside, the four elements on which that hadayavatthu rupa depends, and the other derived materiality present there. All these should be discerned according to characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. (according vsm. XVIII, 3)

If however that samatha yanika individual wishes to begin with discerning rupa dhammas, without having yet discerned the nama dhammas, then he should proceed in the exact same way as a suddha vipassana yanika individual. The way in which a suddha vipassana yanika individual develops ditthi visuddhi is as follows:

Suddhavipassanayaniko pana ayameva va samathayaniko catudhatu vavatthane vuttanam tesam tesam dhatu pariggaha mukhanam annatara mukhasena sankhepatu va vittarato va catasso dhatuyo parigghati.

Which means:

A person whose vehicle is pure insight or a person whose vehicle is serenity, but who wishes to begin insight practice by discerning rUpas instead of namas, should discern the four elements in brief or in detail in one of the various ways given in the chapter XI on the definition of the four elements. (vsm. XVIII, 4)

According to these instructions of the Visuddhimagga a person who wishes to proceed directly to the practice of insight without any jhanas as a foundation, or a person who has attained one or all of the eight jhanas, but who wishes to begin vipassana by

discerning matter first, must begin by discerning the four elements in brief, in detail, or both in brief and in detail.

Vipassana is made up of two sections; contemplation of rUpa and contemplation of nama. These two are also called rUpa pariggaha, discernment of rUpas, and arUpa pariggaha, discernment of namas.

The majjhima commentary and the abhidhamma commentary say:

Tattha bhagava rUpa kammattthanam kathento sankhepa manasikaravasena va vitthara manasikaravasena va catudhatuvavatthanam kathesi. (abhi.com.2.p.252; m.com.1.p.280)

Which means:

Of these two, rUpa kammatthana (contemplation of rUpa) refers to the defining of the four elements by paying attention in the brief way or the detailed way.

These instructions found in the commentaries concerning the method of discerning rUpas in vipassana show that the Buddha has taught that a suddha vipassana yanika, or a samatha yanika who wishes to begin by discerning rUpas, must begin by discerning the four elements in brief or in detail. If a meditator practises according to the Teaching of the Buddha then it will produce the most beneficial result.

The Visuddhimagga clearly states that four elements meditation, which is one of the 40 subjects of meditation, is included in the group of meditations which can reach upacara (access) concentration. This means that it is a meditation subject which must be developed up to upacara concentration.

The method for the development of four elements meditation has been described in detail in Part 2. The Buddha taught this brief method in mahasatipatthana sutta saying:

Puna caparam bhikkhave bhikkhu imameva kayam yatha thitam yatha panihitam dhatuso paccavekkhati, 'atthi imasmim kaye pathavi dhatu apo dhatu tejo dhatu vayo dhatu' ti. (m.1.p.73)

Which means:

Bhikkhus, or again in another way a bhikkhu reflects about this very body however it be positioned or placed as consisting of just elements thus, "There exists in this body just the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element".

The Visuddhimagga further instructs a meditator to discern the four elements, in the bones, sinews, flesh, and skin, separating each out with the hand of wisdom, and to do this again and again one hundred, one thousand, or even one hundred thousand times.

The Visuddhimagga further states:

Tassevam vayamamanassa na cireneva dhatuppabheda-vabhasana pannapariggahito sabhavadhammarammanatta appanam appatto upacaramatto samadhi uppajjati.

Which means:

As he makes effort in this way it is not long before concentration arises in him, which is reinforced by understanding that illuminates the classification of the elements, and which is only access (upacara) and does not reach absorption because it has states which are ultimate realities (paramattha or sabhava dhammas) as its object. (vsm. XI, 42)

Attention should be paid to the fact that the Visudhimagga clearly states that meditation on the four elements can reach up to upacara concentration.

The sub-commentary to Visuddhimagga states:

Samathayanikassahi upacarappana bheda samadhim itarassa khanikasamadhim ubhayesim vimokkhamukhattayam vina na kadacipi lokuttaradhigamo sambhavati.

Which means:

Without the access and absorption concentration in one whose vehicle is serenity, or without the momentary (khanika) concentration in one whose vehicle is pure insight and without the gateways to liberation (knowledge of impermanence, pain, and not-self) the supramundane can never be reached.

So here the sub-commentary uses the term khanika samadhi (momentary concentration) to describe the concentration developed by the suddha vipassana yanika individual, and the visuddhimagga uses the term upacara concentration. This distinction in usage should be understood.

Concerning this usage the sub-commentary explains:

Upacarasamadhi ca rulhi vasena veditabbam. Appanamhi upecca cari samadhi upacarasamadhi appanacettha natthi. Tadisassa pana samadhissa samana lakkhanataya evam vuttam. (Vsm.sub-com.1.436)

Which means:

When the commentary says upacara samadhi when defining the highest concentration attainable by four elements meditation, it must be understood that it is used in the sense of comparison or similarity. Only the concentration close to jhana can be called upacara and in this four elements meditation there is no jhana to be attained because it has states with individual essences as its object. But because the power of concentration attained by four elements meditation is similar to upacara concentration the commentators call it upacara concentration.

So it can be seen that the author of the sub-commentary believed that only the highest kamavacara samadhi which has a serenity object which is prior to or close to jhana can

truly be called upacara concentration. He believed that the highest kamavacara concentration attained by doing four elements meditation is called upacara concentration by the commentators because of its similarity to it, but he believed that it should be called khanika samadhi.